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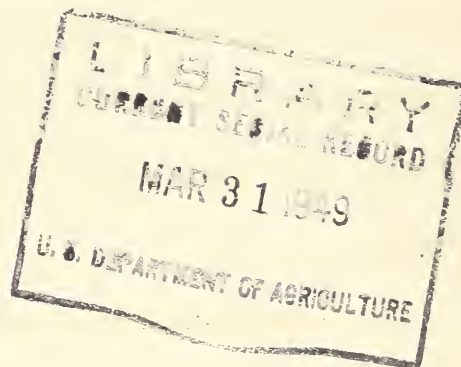
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United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Research Administration
Bureau of Animal Industry

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REPORT ON DEVELOPMENTS
IN THE
CAMPAIGN AGAINST FOOT-AND-MOUTH
DISEASE IN MEXICO

No. 18



NOTE: This report has been prepared on the basis of the best information available at the time of compilation but is subject to later revision. It covers the principal developments in the campaign since the issuance of the 17th report of the series, on December 15, 1948.

Infected Area Reduced by Changes in Quarantine Line

Effective January 17, 1949, a change was made in position of the southeastern quarantine line which frees 4,900 square miles from quarantine. This is the first change in position of the southern quarantine line. The new line follows the old line from the Gulf coast between the States of Veracruz and Tabasco, then it turns west along the Veracruz-Oaxaca border to the Coatzacoalcos River and the Isthmus railroad, following the railroad to Salina Cruz on the Pacific coast.

During December nearly 7,000 square miles of territory were released from quarantine when a portion of the northern quarantine line was moved southward. The new line extends from Tamiahua, Veracruz, to Tamazunchale, San Luis Potosi. The change cuts off a segment that projected northward between Tampico and Valles above the general position of the line. The eastern part of the line now coincides with the position of the wire fence that has been under construction in that area as an aid in controlling the disease.

The December change placed the quarantine line 367 miles from Brownsville, Tex., the nearest point on the United States-Mexican border. It is about 80 miles farther from the United States than the former position.

When the quarantine line was changed it was necessary to shift the location of three district headquarters. The San Luis de la Paz headquarters in Guanajuato State was moved to Queretaro, Queretaro. The headquarters formerly at Tamazunchale, San Luis Potosi, was shifted to Tula, Hidalgo, and the one formerly at Ciudad Valles, San Luis Potosi, to Huauchinango, Puebla.

The news that the Commission had freed a previously quarantined area caused favorable reaction among the Mexican public. Mexican newspapers displayed this news on their front pages and enthusiastically praised the Commission's work, adding that the freeing of formerly infected territory increased Mexico's confidence in the Commission's work to eradicate the disease.

The present quarantine lines as well as the original lines appear on accompanying map.

Resistance to Program

Several instances of resistance to the vaccination program have been occurring over the past three months. There were no outbreaks of violence, however, until January 31 when a mob estimated at nearly 700 persons attacked a livestock inspection crew working in the municipio of Temascalcingo, State of Mexico. Robert L. Proctor, 22, a livestock inspector from Tucson, Ariz., was killed in the attack. Mr. Proctor is the first American victim of mob violence. It was in this same general vicinity that 7 Mexican soldiers and a Mexican veterinarian were killed a little over a year ago. In an earlier incident, on March 26, 1948, a United States livestock inspector, Juan H. Lopez, was shot from ambush while traveling up the Coatzacoalcos River near the town Minatitlan in the State of Veracruz. Two men, who voluntarily confessed to the shooting, blamed their act on their intoxicated condition.

In the January 31 incident, the inspection crew, consisting of Mr. Proctor, a Mexican livestock inspector, a sergeant and two soldiers of the Mexican army, and a civilian guide, met a group of about 70 men as they approached the village of San Pedro El Alto. Upon inquiry by the sergeant,

the group said they were out to gather wood. The crew was allowed to proceed on into the village without interference. Immediately, however, a group of men and women estimated at more than 500 in number, or about four or five times the normal population of the village, surrounded the group. The first group of 70 also reappeared. The Mexican inspector was beaten and left unconscious. Upon regaining consciousness he was allowed to leave with the soldiers and the guide. The party thought Mr. Proctor had made good his escape.

Later investigation revealed, however, that Mr. Proctor was held at the outskirts of the village by a group of women until a part of the mob caught up with him and killed him.

The Mexican government has been prompt in seeking out the perpetrators and early court action is expected. One of the ringleaders is under arrest in Mexico City. Fourteen men said to have confessed participation in the killing are being held at Tamascalcingo. The Minister of Agriculture has assured the Commission prompt action toward justice under the law.

Eradication Measures Progress

During December and January slaughter operations were conducted in the Magdalena, Aguascalientes, and San Luis de la Paz districts in which several additional foci of the disease were located. With the exception of the one outbreak in San Juan del Rio, Queretaro, all these centers were in the immediate vicinity of those already under observation. Early in February there was some infection among vaccinated animals near Matanzas, Jalisco. This is under careful investigation. In all cases the infected

and contact herds were slaughtered, the premises cleaned and disinfected, and quarantine maintained around them. Vaccination also was intensified in those areas.

The vaccine program is making progress and the Commission's forces have been able to carry out the slaughter of herds in the work areas found to be affected with or exposed to active infection. Animals in the surrounding area are vaccinated.

Some resistance to the operations occurred in the States of Hidalgo, Oaxaca, and Jalisco areas during December and as well as at Temascalcingo, State of Mexico, late in January when Robert Proctor was killed. However, when resistance was encountered attempts were made to overcome it by the information men, known as "informadores." In some cases active support by the military troops has been necessary in order that the work could be conducted normally. A recent step has been the placing of local influential citizens, such as teachers and municipio officials, on the Commission's pay roll to assist the informadores in acquainting the people with the program. The aid of these citizens has been utilized in the past but it is now felt that better cooperation will result by making them a part of the program.

In January a total of 2,062 cattle and 558 small animals was slaughtered where centers of active infection were found in the work areas. During December 1,488 cattle and 329 small animals were slaughtered. Owners of these animals were paid fair indemnities.

The Commission's forces inspected 1,307,459 animals in January and 944,594 animals during December. The total number of animals vaccinated up to January 31 was 4,321,538.

Vaccine Production Increasing

Another record was made in the production of foot-and-mouth disease vaccine in the Commission's laboratories. For the month of January a total of 2,400,000 doses of foot-and-mouth/^{disease}vaccine was produced. During December the figure was 1,750,000 doses. The cumulative production in the Commission's laboratories, since they began operating in May 1948, now stands at 7,724,000 doses.

An additional gathering point at Aguascalientes, Aguascalientes, for cattle purchased in northern Mexico for vaccine production, now supplements the unit at Valles, San Luis Potosi.

Extensive Disinfection Operations

Commission field forces conducted disinfection operations with the aid of 193 disinfection stations as a means of protecting the northern and southern quarantine lines. These operations applied to more than 27,000 transportation facilities during December and included the following: cargo planes, 189; passenger planes, 689; trucks, 19,892; railroad cars, 4,679; boats and barges, 1,632; total, 27,081.

In January these operations applied to 22,394 transportation facilities, including the following: cargo planes, 139; passenger planes, 2,239; trucks, 14,938; railroad cars, 3,807; and boats and barges, 1,271.

The Commission's forces also conducted other disinfection operations such as the thorough cleaning and disinfection of premises where infected and exposed animals were slaughtered.

Commission Personnel Increased

During December the Commission's civilian personnel was increased by nearly 400 persons. By February 8, the total was 3,596 most of whom were

administrative and clerical employees, livestock inspectors, veterinarians and other trained workers. The United States section numbered 669 and the Mexican section 221. In addition to those listed in the United States and Mexican sections, there were 2,706 unskilled workers employed by the joint Commission in Mexico, D. F., and in the field. Also, troops of the Mexican Army were on duty at disinfection stations, along the patrol lines, and for the protection of Commission personnel.

Enforcement of Border Quarantine

In order to extend further the cooperation between the Government agencies along the Mexican border, and to increase the efficiency of the Bureau's foot-and-mouth disease border patrol, arrangements were made with the Bureau of Customs for that agency to deputize certain key Bureau personnel as Customs agents. This action broadens the authority of the selected Bureau officers in that they will now have broader powers to make arrests, as well as to seize and destroy prohibited animals and products entering illegally from Mexico.

Border-patrol riders cooperate with other Government agencies in enforcing regulations of those agencies, as well as to maintain the foot-and-mouth disease quarantine along the border.

The border patrol in cooperating with the Bureau of Customs officers has been instrumental in the Customs officials making a number of important seizures of articles entering illegally.

In December, it was necessary to destroy only 22 prohibited animals along the entire length of the border because of illegal entry. Of this number 16 were cattle and 6 were goats.

However, the patrol was active in seizing and destroying large amounts of prohibited and restricted products as a means of preventing the entry of the virus of foot-and-mouth disease.

Products seized and destroyed during December, a representative month, because of illegal entry included nearly 2 tons of meat, more than half a ton of hay and straw, and the same quantity of dairy products. Inspectors along the border also reported the inspection of 109,318 automobiles, 23,913 trucks, and 729 railroad cars.

Cooperative Research in Europe

Bureau veterinarians are conducting cooperative research leading towards the development of large-scale tissue culture virus production for use in preparing foot-and-mouth disease vaccine in Holland. This development, if successful, will be of great value to the Commission in Mexico. Plans have been developed cooperatively in Denmark to investigate the effects on the duration of immunity by increasing the amount of absorbed virus per dose of aluminum hydroxide type vaccine. Equipment is being supplied to the Pirbright Research Station in England, which will promote further studies on the Mexican virus. The cooperative research work in Europe has been planned to utilize available limited facilities in an attempt to furnish information vitally needed to assist in carrying out the control program in Mexico.

Canning Plants in Northern Mexico Active

As previously reported, the U. S. Department of Agriculture has sponsored a canned-meat program in northern Mexico, to provide an outlet for cattle produced there that can no longer be exported to the United

States because of the border quarantine. The Department's participation has consisted in technical services and in the purchase of canned meat for resale, largely for European relief purposes.

Deliveries of canned meat and gravy on outstanding contracts through December 31, 1948, totaled 67.6 million pounds. During the year ended June 30, 1948, deliveries totaled 43.2 million pounds. For the period July through December 1948 the number of cattle slaughtered for canned meat production in northern Mexico amounted to 268,000 head, making a total of 452,000 cattle slaughtered in the area since late 1947 for the production of canned meats for sale to the United States Department of Agriculture.

All of the canned meats produced in the year ended June 30, 1948, were sold for export but since that time only about 5 million pounds of the production for the current fiscal year have been sold. Total stocks available for sale on December 31, 1948, amounted to 62 million pounds.

In recent months all possible export outlets have been canvassed, but the results in terms of sales have been disappointing. Sales thus far have been made principally to the U. S. Army, for use in occupied areas, the International Refugee Organization, and the Italian and Austrian Governments.

All sales to date have been at prices equal to the buying price plus costs of storage and transportation. The buying price for contracts continues to be 28 cents per pound for canned meat and gravy and 18 cents per pound for canned edible meat by-products.

During November and December certain purchases or contracts to purchase cattle for the canning plants threatened to interfere with the holding of the northern quarantine line. In order to correct this situation all plants in northern Mexico having contracts were notified in late December 1948 to confine their purchases to the States in northern Mexico, which before the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in late 1946 had sizable Mexican export quotas for the shipment of live cattle to the United States. These States are: Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, Tamaulipas, and Durango.